Ted Fellman
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To: Bonita Lavelle/EPR/R8/USEPA/US@EPA
cc: Wendy Thomi/OCP/R8/USEPA/US@EPA, Patricia Courtney/OCP/R8/USEPA/US@EPA, Arthur
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Subject: Working Group meeting

Bonnie,

Happy Monday. Did you feel like you had a weekend? I was looking at the draft agenda for our
Thursday Working Group meeting and wondered how accurate it still is (even with your written
comments). I know we talked on a few occasions about where this group is or should be going. I
think we have a real opportunity here to guide its development into a form that might meet all of our
needs better. We've discussed this, but since I'm not sure what we decided, I wanted to reiterate
my thoughts and get your feelings on the matter.

I think we heard from Lorraine that the technical people can meet on their own schedule so long as
the community knows about any meetings and is invited. I think a TAG will help immensely at
some point. I don't expect large community turnout at such meetings, probably just a few people
to keep tabs on progress. The good news is that we can share information without the need to go
through all the community issues with all of the technical people every time. I hope this meets your
technical timing stresses. (Although remember that one message we're hearing is don't go so fast
that the community can't keep up).

On the other hand, I would like to see the monthly meetings become more of a forum. Updates on
progress from all relevent parties, a chance for the community members to air concerns & ask
questions, etc. Obviously there are times when you will still have technical agenda items, but I
think the key is to make sure that this is not primarily a technical meeting, but rather a more general
forum to meet everyone's needs. If we revisit the calendar, the issue of night or weekend meetings
makes a lot more sense if the meeting really is designed for more general consumption. For such a
forum to work, we really need to take a few steps back and reevaluate, as a group, what we want
out of such a group. This is the crux of my suggestion. I think we should take some time at this
meeting (or at least suggest the idea this Thursday for our next meeting) to discuss what we want
out of the Working Group. I know this sounds touchy feely, but with some help from our
facilitators I think it could allow for some real progress in the group. What I want to do is put
everything out on the table, our needs, their needs, ATSDR, the State, City, even Asarco (they
might decide they only want to follow the technical progress). Ideally we could come to the table
with open minds and try to craft a group that works for everyone. I think the big advantage to this
approach over the long term is that it sends a message that we're open to change, we're flexible,
we're listening to them and hearing that we have some problems to work through. But more
importantly, we're bringing them into the process. Instead of just complaining, we're asking them
how to improve the situation, which shifts the focus to a constructive one. I also think that they
will feel more ownership in a group that they play a more central role in defining. All of which helps
everyone to get more out of the whole process.

Once again, we've discussed a lot of this. I just wanted to write it up so that you might give it
some more thought, or discuss it with the facilitators or others. I think we have a real opportunity
here, but I haven't really heard for sure what sort of direction we plan to take at this transition point
in the process. Let me know. Thanks.

Ted